

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The amendments set out above and the following remarks are responsive to the points raised by the Office Action dated July 9, 2007. In view of the amendments set out above and the following remarks, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Objection to the Specification

The Office objects to the specification on the grounds that the wording with respect to the comparative examples on pages 10 and 16 teaches that the magnetic powder was coated with both the coupling agent and the resin powder, which is the inventive precursor, and that it therefore unclear how these comparative examples differ from the claimed invention.

One of the objectives of the claimed invention is to provide a plastic magnet precursor that is obtained without requiring a kneading step (specification, page 2, second full paragraph). Kneading subjects the components of the plastic magnet precursor to thermal and shearing forces, which deteriorate and oxidize the thermoplastic resin powder and destroy the magnet powder (specification, page 2, first full paragraph).

Examples 1 and 3 produce the plastic magnet precursors of the invention *without* using a kneading step. In contrast, comparative Examples 1 and 3 produce plastic magnet precursors *with* a kneading step. The claimed plastic magnet precursors illustrated in Examples 1 and 3 (without kneading) produce a magnet with superior magnetic properties compared with those of Comparative Examples 1 and 3 (with kneading) (Table 1). The results indicate that not only do the plastic magnet precursors of the invention make a kneading step unnecessary, but that elimination of the kneading step provides a plastic magnet precursor that produces a magnet with superior magnetic qualities. Elimination of the kneading step prevents heat deterioration and oxidation of the thermoplastic resin powder and destruction of the magnet powder (specification, page 11, 5th full paragraph). Examples 1 and 3 and Comparative Examples 1 and 3, therefore, effectively demonstrate the difference between a magnet obtained from a magnet precursor that was kneaded and that which was obtained from a magnet precursor that was not kneaded. Accordingly, Applicants submit that with these remarks, the objection to the specification has been obviated and should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants are pleased to note that the Office Action indicates claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 17, and 18 to be allowable, and claims 6 and 8 to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 2 is amended to include the limitations of allowable claim 6.

The Pending Claims

Claim 2 is amended to include the limitations of claim 6, which has been cancelled. Claims 9 and 10 have also been cancelled, so that claims 1-2, 4-5, 7-8, and 17-18 are pending.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102, 103

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,200,270 to Ishida et al. (hereinafter, "Ishida").

Claim 10 was rejected under § 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,211,896 to Ward et al. (hereinafter, "Ward").

Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,429,899 to Chiba et al. (hereinafter, "Chiba").

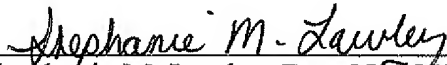
Each of these rejections is separately and respectfully traversed. However, in order to expedite matters and allow the application to pass to issuance quickly, claim 2 has been amended to include the limitations of allowable dependent claim 6, and claims 9 and 10 have been cancelled.

Accordingly, this amendment obviates all of the outstanding rejections and places the claims in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,


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